Introduction

A motorway toll booth may seem an unlikely symbol of separatist struggle, but in May 2012 the booths on Catalonia's main trunk roads became just that. A campaign entitled 'We don't want to pay' (#novolempagar), organized on Facebook and Twitter and reported by the media, succeeded in causing long tail-backs as motorists politely refused to pay tolls. The campaign was launched on 1 May, with organised convoys of vehicles targeting various key points around the region, some of them bearing the *estelada*, an unofficial variation on the Catalan flag used by pro-independence groups. Subsequently, some motorists refused to pay whenever they used the toll roads and a number of fines were issued as a result. The motive for their refusal was that Catalonia has more toll roads – and Catalans therefore spend more of their money on tolls – than any other region of Spain, including Madrid. But this was not just a protest directed at the Spanish government: it was part of a growing movement calling for independence for Catalonia on the grounds that Catalans would be materially better off if they had their own state. How did something as banal as motorway tolls come to be associated with Catalan independence? Is this really what the recent rise in support for secession boils down to, the money in Catalans' pockets?

If so, this represents a significant shift from the Catalanist perspectives of the late twentieth century, which were mainly articulated around language, culture and identity. Cultural distinctiveness was, of course, used as an argument for political and administrative autonomy, but financial considerations were secondary and more regionalist than nationalist in character (Keating et al., 2003: 55). *Convergència i Unió* (CiU), the hegemonic party in Catalonia from 1980–2003, was very much governed by the philosophy articulated by its leader, Jordi Pujol, in his investiture speech as President of Catalonia's Autonomous Government on 22 April 1980: 'If there is one objective that a Catalan government has to prioritise it is the defence, strengthening and projection of those things that mean that, down the centuries, Catalonia has been Catalonia: its language, its culture, the experience of its history, sentiment and the collective consciousness, the defence of its political rights, the will to be . . . ' (Pujol, 2011: Kindle loc. 164).[1] Pujol's primordialist stance contrasts markedly with the later

perspective of a different Catalanist leader, Josep-Lluís Carod-Rovira of *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC), who in 2008 applauded those who have come to desire independence influenced only by 'the pocket and the head, in other words, the desire for a better life' (Carod-Rovira, 2008: 55).[2] To use these extreme opposites as examples represents an oversimplification, of course, but they illustrate the main question: exactly why have Catalans come to support independence in much greater numbers over the last decade?

To date, this question has mainly been tackled by political scientists, on the basis of analyses of voting patterns and the correlation of different types of survey data, and by political theorists through studies of the strains in the constitutional relationship between Spain and Catalonia and the question of sovereignty. These approaches have produced some important contributions, but they need to be complemented by other forms of analysis drawing on the resources of a diverse range of academic disciplines. This is because in order to understand how particular forms of pro-independence discourse have unexpectedly become hegemonic we need also to take into account the cultural and emotional dimensions of the process. This Introduction will examine my reasons for asserting the importance of these dimensions, before giving a brief outline of the structure of the rest of the book.

Rationality, Ethnicity, Instrumentalism

Theorists of secession often treat the phenomenon in terms of a 'cost/benefit' analysis. For example, Viva Ona Bartkus describes secessionist movements as the product of the constant performance of such calculations: the cost of secession vs. the benefit of secession, and the cost of remaining part of the nation-state vs. the benefits of doing so (Bartkus, 1999: 4; see also Sorens, 2005). 'Costs' and 'benefits' might be either tangible (relating to economic well-being or political power), or intangible (for example, the freedom to deploy symbols or use an autochthonous language without interference). Any changes in political circumstances will shift the equation either towards or away from independence as a viable proposition at any given time. However, this does not make a choice between independence and the status quo a simple either/or proposition, since the cost/benefit calculations have different dimensions that – taken together – may give a result that is ambivalent or even conflicting. Furthermore, an actual attempt at secession might only be possible at an 'opportune moment' that might depend on factors beyond the secessionists' control (Bartkus, 1999: 145).

Jason Sorens argues that at the moment of making a decision to support independence the tangible always wins over the intangible: 'Secessionist parties in advanced democracies succeed not because they appeal to a primordial past but because they are able to present independence or wideranging autonomy as beneficial in political and economic terms' (Sorens, 2005: 307). For Sorens, rather than being the driving force behind the desire for independence, ethnic identity and national sentiment are tools that help secessionists to achieve important political and economic goals. His list of common 'risk factors' for secessionism includes perceptions of economic neglect by the state, relative affluence, a significant population, and geographical distance from the centre of power, all of which apply to Catalonia (Sorens, 2005: 309–10, 319–20). These need to be seen in the more general context of recent globalisation, and the increased autonomy offered to many regions by their central government as a response to this (Sorens, 2004).

According to Sorens, a strong sense of group identity is not in itself enough to persuade individuals that they should support independence, no matter what linguistic, cultural and kinship ties the group may enjoy. It appears, then, that even for nationalists, secession is not about the emancipation of an age-old nation, but the creation of a new state that satisfies contemporary needs.

However, this distinction between primordialism and instrumentalism, national sentiment and calculating reason, is too clear-cut and ignores the multiple dimensions of the nation itself. Sorens himself points out that Sardinia meets many of the conditions that could give rise to a strong secessionist movement and yet does not have one, and hypothesises that this is due to the relatively weak position of the Sard language and the lack of a sense of Sardinian national identity (Sorens, 2005: 322). We must therefore be careful to distinguish ethnic identity from national identity, since in most cases national identity has both ethnic and civic components (Smith, 1991: 13). Furthermore, Anthony D. Smith proposes that national identity must work on two different levels, the socio-political and the cultural-psychological (Smith, 1991: 70). Steven J. Mock highlights the tensions that can result from these different demands: 'the nation must be both preserved and invented insofar as, broadly speaking, it is the former that satisfies the cultural-psychological and the latter that addresses the sociopolitical' (Mock, 2012: 44). Mock considers that nationalists' attitudes towards their ethnic past represent neither authenticity (as primordialists would have it) nor invention (as suggested by modernists), but profound ambivalence. On a broader level, national identity as a whole is also underpinned by ambivalence, hence its complexity and capacity for adaptation (Mock, 2012: 280).

Mock's argument is partly based on the dialogue between modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches to nationalism. In a nutshell, the key area of dispute between the two approaches is the extent to which a pre-existing ethnic community, or 'ethnie', genuinely conditions the modern nation, rather than simply providing material that nationalists may draw upon at will for their own purposes. This debate extends specifically to motivations for secession and ethnic violence: is ethnicity inherently and perpetually conflictive?; or is it in fact epiphenomenal, 'a mere "spin" that politicians put on events so as to mask their true motives'? (Hale, 2008: 2, 30–1); or something in between? Mock suggests that the modernist/ethno-symbolist debate is best resolved by side-stepping it: if the members of a nation believe its founding myths and revere its symbols, then it does not matter whether these are invented or not (Mock, 2012: 281–2). Dismissing their beliefs, even after thorough intellectual scrutiny of them, is not going to help us to solve nationalist conflicts. My own opinion is very similar: arguing about the rights and wrongs of Catalan discourses on national identity, or their Spanish counterparts, would not be productive in a study of this kind, nor would focusing purely on their construction. Instead, what is needed at this point is an understanding of the way that long-term discourses about national identity interact with contemporary events and concerns, the ambivalence and anxiety this generates in those who are weighing up Catalonia's possible political futures, and how this might translate into political action.

My argument, then, is that cultural products allow us to explore dimensions of these questions that a purely political focus does not. Literature, film and television will therefore be used here alongside a more politically-orientated discussion of recent events and shifting political discourses. There are primarily two reasons for doing so. Firstly, it allows a deeper understanding of the notion of ambivalence, which is more easily expressed through culture. (Political rhetoric is of course normally used to provide certainties rather than to explore areas of uncertainty.) Secondly, it sheds light on the role of Catalonia's cultural and intellectual elites in generating support for independence. In general terms, nationalist cultural elites in stateless nations tend to play the role of promoters of the national culture, creating a distinctive cultural community that fosters a sense of solidarity, and attempting to mobilise others outside their own circles (Guibernau, 1999: 93–4). In Catalonia, the prominence of elite forms of regionalism/nationalism since the nineteenth century has led to the characterisation of the movement as primarily bourgeois (Balcells, 1996: 23). One major exception to this can be located in the 1930s, when class-based Catalanist struggle supported by various factions on the left of politics

briefly became hegemonic before being crushed by the Franco regime (Balcells, 1996: 87–105). As we will see, one of those forces – Catalan republicanism – has also become a lynchpin of the current drive for independence. Moreover, some of the impetus for independence has been taken out of the hands of the political parties altogether, by civil pro-independence groups that cut across party lines. This has led to claims that the struggle for independence in Catalonia is primarily a bottom-up rather than a top-down movement (Guibernau, 2014).

However, this characterisation operates on only one dimension (political parties↔civil society), ignoring the crucial intersecting factor of the activities of the cultural and intellectual elites. It also hides the fact that one of the key elements in their own influence is their close relationship with the pro-independence (or at least 'pro-referendum') sectors of the Catalan print and broadcast media, which is reciprocally beneficial. This book therefore also touches on issues related to what Manuel Castells calls 'communication power', one aspect of which is 'how social movements and agents of political change proceed in our society through the reprogramming of communication networks, so becoming able to convey messages that introduce new values to the minds of people and inspire hope for political change' (Castells, 2009: 8). The multidimensionality of these power networks and 'the rise of the interactive production of meaning' problematise the very idea of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' movements, suggesting that instead of trying to fit our analysis into such a one-dimensional model we should be alert to the indicators of complexity: unpredictability, instability and 'butterfly effects' (Castells, 2009: 132; Urry, 2005: 237). On one hand, this very complexity must surely account for some of the dynamism of the pro-independence movement. On the other, we also need to be alert to the emotional impact of such unpredictability, including the potential effects on political behaviour of the uncertainty and anxiety it produces in the general public.

Emotion, Affect, Anxiety

Jaume Lorés describes the general sense of Catalanism that existed after the Franco regime as 'non-specific, but very heartfelt' (Lorés, 1985: 60).[3] This lack of specificity was not surprising given that political expressions of Catalanism had been banned for several decades, while cultural expressions were severely limited in their scope because of restrictions on the public use and institutional promotion of the Catalan language. Jordi Pujol managed effectively to fill this void after 1980 with his particular

vision of a Catalan nation that was inclusive but at the same time based on inherited cultural characteristics. One of his party's key achievements was to shift Catalans' perceptions so that the majority began to think of Catalonia as a nation rather than a region.[4] Nevertheless, this was accompanied by the establishment of a regional bureaucracy that crystallised institutional Catalanism into a form that may have been more specific but was not so conducive to nationalist sentiment (Crameri, 2000). This led some commentators to complain that people were becoming 'tired' of Catalanism, which therefore needed to reinvent itself (Strubell i Trueta, 1997). On the other hand, more recent events have stimulated forms of what Michael Billig calls 'hot nationalism' (Billig, 1995). Emotion – or 'passion' – is a vital component of hot nationalism (Billig, 1995: 44), and this is certainly true of the recent rise in support for independence in Catalonia, where for many people their commitment to the nation has once more become 'heartfelt'.

Academic interest in the role of the emotions in social and political life has increased substantially in recent years and produced a number of significant publications (e.g. Ahmed, 2004; Neuman et al., 2007a; Nussbaum, 2013). Two strands emerge from this work that are of interest for the present discussion, one related to the role of what we might call 'collective' emotions, and another related to affect. The term 'collective' is of course misleading, since as Sara Ahmed puts it, 'shared feelings are not about feeling the same feeling' (Ahmed, 2004: 11). The idea of a shared national sentiment is actually a product of 'collective misrecognition', because this sentiment becomes reified – or 'fetishised'– through a discourse that negates the conditions of its production and circulation (Bourdieu, 1991: 153; Ahmed, 2004: 11). This means that if we ask nationalists about the emotions that motivate them to act on behalf of the nation, they will not possess the required level of self-consciousness to step outside this discursive construct, and will instead use the question as an opportunity for self-justification (Barbalet, 2001: 67). Unless we are specifically interested in examining these self-justifications, therefore, it is more productive to analyse the ways in which 'emotions become attributes of collectives, which get constructed as "being" through "feeling"' (Ahmed, 2004: 2).

In this way, the study of discourses related to collective emotions can provide a useful perspective on the role of nationalist sentiment in the current rise in support for independence in Catalonia; an examination of the role of affect provides another. The term itself is only slightly less problematic than 'collective emotion', since it has various definitions that derive from different theoretical approaches and posit different distinctions between affect, feeling and emotion (6 et al., 2007: 5–6). Nevertheless,

Neuman et al. are able to give a relatively straightforward definition that underpins the work presented in their edited volume on the role of affect in political thought and behaviour: '*Affect* is the evolved cognitive and physiological response to the detection of personal significance' (Neuman et al., 2007b: 9). Despite the fact that affect is therefore a phenomenon firmly located in the individual, it is quite possible that a particular object or event will provoke similar responses in a very large number of people, thereby making it possible to speak of affect as something that reveals common patterns (Marquis, 2012: 427). Indeed, Ahmed draws attention to the fact that affect accumulates around an object or sign specifically as the result of circulation (Ahmed, 2004: 45). Affect therefore has a collective structural dimension that is inherently dynamic, and this too can be studied in relation to the influence of affect on the areas of political decision-making that involve questions of national sentiment.

In *Communication Power*, Manuel Castells picks up on one particular aspect of the recent work on affect: affective intelligence theory (Castells, 2009: 146–50; Cassino and Lodge, 2007). He describes its importance for an understanding of the link between reason and emotion in political decision-making:

> The theory of affective intelligence provides a useful analytical framework that inspires a diversified body of evidence in political communication and political psychology supporting the notion that emotional appeals and rational choices are complementary mechanisms whose interaction and relative weight in the process of decision-making depend on the context of the process. (Castells, 2009: 146)

The crux of the theory is that an individual's judgement is conditioned by pre-existing affective dispositions (Cassino and Lodge, 2007: 101). Positive or negative affective responses to particular stimuli then produce 'affective tags' which attach to the object in question. These act as shortcuts, conditioning subsequent responses to comparable stimuli (102–4). This process has an effect on our political decision-making because it 'tends to alter the processing strategy of the individual to ensure a certain outcome, generally the maintenance of the current affect' (105). In contrast, individuals who feel anxious about a particular issue and have no strong affective predisposition to guide their thinking look more closely at the contextual information available to them before reaching a judgement (ibid). The conscious exercise of rationality therefore tends to be reserved for unexpected or uncertain situations (Mackuen et al., 2007: 127).

Castells also highlights research that indicates that the relationship

between material interests and political choices is nowhere near as straight-forward as might be supposed (Castells, 2009: 153–4). In fact, he states quite categorically that 'values shape citizens' decisions more often than their [material] interests do' (Castells, 2009: 154). Even in extreme situations such as an economic crisis, when material interests become more salient, voting behaviour will tend to reflect emotional rather than rational responses to the crisis (ibid). This has two important implications for our analysis of Catalonia: it calls into question some of the more instrumentalist interpretations of recent developments, while at the same time inviting us to look at what might produce the emotional responses that steer Catalans' reactions to messages about the desirability of independence.

This book will therefore examine elements that help to constitute the on-going construction of national sentiment and how they relate to more transient questions about the costs and benefits of independence. In other words, I am interested in how the symbolic interacts with the pragmatic. Brubaker and Cooper's distinction between categories of practice (used by 'lay' people implicated in the practice itself) and categories of analysis (used by theorists) is helpful here (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). They warn that theorists should avoid 'uncritically adopting categories of practice as categories of analysis' (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 5). Since concepts such as 'identity', 'ethnicity' and 'nation' fall into both camps, it is easy to fall into the trap of reproducing the way that they are reified by those who employ them to signal something fundamental about their everyday experience (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 4–5). To avoid this,

> We should seek to explain the processes and mechanisms through which what has been called the 'political fiction' of the 'nation' – or of the 'ethnic group,' 'race,' or other putative 'identity' – can crystallize, at certain moments, as a powerful, compelling reality. (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 5)

My aim is therefore to analyse how the categories of practice employed by Catalan nationalism have shifted over a defined period of time, high-lighting the complexities and disjunctions revealed by these shifts. On one hand, mainstream Catalanism is moving towards a discourse based around what we might call 'the right to be materialist', centred on demands for the democratic recognition of what the majority of Catalans want even if this happens to be primarily motivated by a desire for material benefits. On the other hand, many of the specific manifestations of this discourse reveal a continuing attachment to the traditional symbols of nationalism, most of which are derived from conceptions of the nation as an ethnic group. These

contradictory factors give rise to tensions when the hegemonic Catalanist discourse of inclusivity and voluntary identification with the nation clashes with symbols whose origins in primordialist conceptions of the nation have largely been erased by the discourse itself. Whenever this erasure comes to light (as it frequently does during debates between proponents and opponents of independence), this gives rise to questions about its positive or negative effects. Is it a necessary step for the creation of an inclusive and cohesive community, or a way of disguising the imposition of a particular concept of Catalonia on any residents who do not share it? The components of identity normally associated with ethnicity therefore have the potential to act as both an integrating and disintegrating force in the current context of Catalonia.

The discussion in this volume therefore focuses on three main questions, all of which are interrelated: (1) to what extent is the current secession movement in Catalonia driven by instrumentalism and opportunistic cost/benefit calculations?; (2) what is the role of nationalist sentiment, public emotion and affect in producing active support for independence?; and 3) what is the role played by cultural and intellectual elites in stimulating public support for the political project of independence? These questions partly arise out of the movement's own self-characterisation as one which is civic in nature, inclusive, profoundly democratic, not primarily motivated by questions of identity, and largely driven by the will of the people (in other words, 'bottom-up'). Indeed, one of the aims of this book is to demonstrate how this narrative has been constructed. However, if we are fully to understand recent events in Catalonia we also need to examine the contradictions and gaps that are papered over by this narrative.

As has already been noted, some of these contradictions provide obvious points of attack for opponents of Catalan independence. Thus Catalans are accused of instrumentalism (in the form of the manipulation of nationalist values by political elites in order to gain power and material advantage) and ethnic particularism (through the 'imposition' of the Catalan language and culture, and of a nationalist discourse that silences other voices). Such attacks have become increasingly blunt and virulent, especially in certain sections of the Spanish right-wing media, which have gone as far as equating Catalanism with totalitarianism (e.g. Anonymous, 2013a) – a charge that has been circulating widely in inflammatory comments posted by individuals on the web and social media. Reasoned opposition to the idea that Catalans have the right to choose independence is increasingly being displaced by insults and exaggerations. Although not analysed in detail in this book, this anti-Catalanism needs to be borne in

mind because of the widening gap it produces between Catalans' self-image and public image, and the complex ways in which this process stimulates shifts in identity and identification (Guibernau, 2013: 16–17; Maalouf, 2000: 11–13).

According to Richard Jenkins, even though a group's self-image and public image do not bear any necessary relation to one another, there will always be at least some kind of interaction between the two: 'some process of conscious or unconscious adjustment in the ongoing making and re-making of social identity' (Jenkins, 1997: 59). Furthermore, the ethnic categorisations that lie at the heart of this process not only lead to stereo-typing in everyday discourse, they also become institutionalised (Jenkins, 1997: 61). This is why, as Rogers Brubaker puts it, 'Categorization and classification in [. . .] formal and informal settings are increasingly seen as not only central to but as *constitutive* of ethnicity, race and nationhood' (Brubaker, 2009: 32–33). Naturally, Catalans have always tended to con-struct their national identity by categorising themselves as different from other Spaniards. What is less often acknowledged is that Spaniards also constitute their national identity with reference to their differences with the Catalans (Muro and Quiroga, 2004). This process is necessarily ambivalent, in the sense that much Spanish nationalist rhetoric is based on a denial that there are any substantial differences, in order to argue that Catalans should accept that they are fundamentally Spanish and stop pushing for cultural and political recognition as a separate group. Nevertheless, the process by which Catalans are categorised by other Spaniards is constitutive of both Catalan and Spanish identities.

Henry E. Hale extends the idea of categorisation in order to give a new twist to arguments about the role of ethnicity, by proposing a conceptual separation of ethnicity and ethnic politics. Like Sorens, he believes ethnic-ity is not a sufficient motivation for secession, but rather than seeing it simply as a tool to be drawn upon at will by ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, he posits that it does have a conditioning effect, although not in the way defended by ethno-symbolists. Instead, he views ethnicity as 'a mechanism for uncertainty reduction' that is needed because uncertainty has negative emotional consequences (Hale, 2008: 62). He also suggests that it provides a way of interpreting the world that precedes conscious thought and action (48). This is because ethnicity becomes a 'category-based rule of thumb', producing automatic responses in a similar way to affective tagging, as described above (although Hale suggests that schemata based on ethnicity precede both emotion and cognition and would therefore condition the tag-ging process itself) (48). Ethnicity therefore also 'precedes the politics of interest, helping make the pursuit of interest possible' (33), and it is this

'pursuit of interest' that we see played out within ethnic politics. In turn, the conflict that this generates is a result of the desire for uncertainty reduc-tion, since the ethnic divides that are solidified by categorisation 'make it both easier for those in a region to act together and also more difficult for them to trust the centre' (Breuilly et al., 2011: 682).

Hale's theory has several aspects that have the potential to illuminate recent events in Catalonia, including his insistence that the passion often displayed by separatists springs from their recognition that independence could give them a materially better life, thus linking rather than separating the emotional and the economic (Hale, 2008: 85). However, before making use of his view of ethnicity, specifically, we first need to ask whether ethnicity actually provides a good 'rule-of-thumb' for Catalans. The hege-monic Catalanist discourse of the post-Franco era has always disavowed ethnicity as the basis of belonging. While this discourse might obscure problems encountered by foreign immigrants, for example, we should not jump to the conclusion that Catalans hypocritically pay lip service to civic nationalism while secretly retaining ethnically-based beliefs.[5] In fact, Catalan ethnicity is relatively 'thin', in the sense that it 'organizes relatively little of social life and action' (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998: 73–4), espe-cially now that Catalonia is so ethnically diverse. Hale, on the other hand, specifically bases his theory on situations where there are thick ethnic divides. However, he also points out the importance of territory, saying that ethnicity plays a significant role in reducing 'uncertainties based on terri-torial relationships and the distribution of goods that are important for people's life chances' (Hale, 2008: 78). If, as is the case in Catalonia, ethnicity would be a problematic 'rule of thumb' for many because of its thinness, then perhaps territory itself can become a kind of 'post-ethnic' substitute. Indeed, Michael Keating describes territory as one of 'two struc-turing features of nationality claims' (identity being the other), and argues that in recent years 'territory has become *more* important as a basis for polit-ical legitimacy' (Keating, 2001: 16; my emphasis). There are also echoes of this in the way that the boundaries of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia have become the accepted limits of the independence movement despite their arbitrary nature and the resulting exclusion of some who would wish to be included (i.e. a minority of the residents of contiguous Catalan-speaking areas).

Territory can only operate as a substitute mechanism for uncertainty reduction if it is accompanied by some sense of group identity, because otherwise it could not generate the necessary trust. However, Montserrat Guibernau argues that people are surprisingly willing to trust others with whom they feel they have something in common, making it relatively easy

to engage a group of disparate individuals in a common project – through social networking, for example (Guibernau, 2013: 103). Indeed the idea of Catalonia as a project was a mainstay of Pujol's discourse (Pujol, 2012a: Kindle loc. 1351). Other aspects of ethnic identity might then find their own substitutes in mechanisms that connect people within a certain territory and rely on processes of identification and 'belonging by choice', rather than identity (Guibernau, 2013: 26–49). Nevertheless, the residual lure of ethnicity remains strong, which brings us back to the profound ambivalence of nationalist movements described by Steven Mock.

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In order to explore different dimensions of this ambivalence, this book is broadly structured around an argument that moves from a primarily political to a primarily cultural focus. **Chapter 1** provides necessary background information on the political parties and civil groups that have been active in the independence debate since 2005. It is mainly designed for readers who may not already be familiar with the Catalan context, but also includes a discussion of the importance of the internet and social media in permitting civil society to play such a dynamic role in the pro-independence movement. **Chapter 2** takes the form of an analysis of key events from 2005–2013 that either have changed the focus of the debate or appear to have motivated more Catalans to support independence. **Chapter 3** looks at the way certain elements of the political discourse around independence have shifted and crystallised over the same period. Both of these chapters also delve further into subjects presented in this Introduction: instrumentalism; identity and identification; anti-Catalanism; and the interface between rational and emotional reasons for supporting independence.

The next three chapters focus on particular cultural phenomena that demonstrate the role of Catalan cultural and intellectual elites in engaging public support for independence. **Chapter 4** looks at the use that is being made of Catalonia's past, focussing on the events associated with the loss of Catalonia's autonomous institutions as a result of the War of Succession. 2014 is the three-hundredth anniversary of the end of the war after the siege of Barcelona, and messages about the deeds of its heroes form a potent rallying-cry inviting Catalans to fight for the creation of a twenty-first century Catalan state. **Chapter 5** examines the role of television in engaging the public in current debates on independence, both through presenting rational arguments and by stimulating particular affective responses. Finally, **Chapter 6** examines a group of novels that imagine a future Catalan state in an attempt to reassure the reader that such a thing is both possible

and desirable. The differences and similarities in their approach further illustrate the ambivalence generated when relating a nation's past identity to hopes for a renewed future.